

PARKS AND RECREATION COMMISSION

Thursday, August 19, 2010, 7 p.m.

ARC, 1701 W. Ash

MINUTES

Commission Present: Marin Blevins, Sue Davis, Terry Kloeppel, Dan Devine, Bill Pauls, Meredith Donaldson, Linda Hutton

Commission Absent: None

Staff Present: Mike Hood, Mike Griggs, Erika Coffman, Tammy Miller, Gabe Huffington

Blevins called the meeting to order at 7:00 pm.

Agenda: Hood requested that one item be added to the agenda, an update on the Park Sales Tax. Blevins inserted the new agenda item after the Budget Presentation. The agenda was approved as amended on a motion by Pauls, seconded by Donaldson.

Minutes: The July minutes were approved on a motion by Kloeppel, seconded by Davis.

Monthly Report: Kloeppel asked about the grass at Rainbow, that there seemed to be spots in areas. Huffington said that a chemical was applied to control the spots. Those areas will be overseeded to help the grass grow back.

Blevins asked about golf revenues?

Hood answered that it has been a difficult year in regard to the number of rounds played. After a cold winter, wet spring and hot summer, conditions have not been conducive to golfers. Hood attributed in part the decreased rounds to weather, but also to a still sluggish economy and perhaps a lack of interest in investing the time it takes to play 18 holes of golf. He said that revenues were down about \$100,000.

Kloeppel asked about the number of trespass warnings at Stephens Lake Park, and if the outside security firm has had an impact on that?

Griggs confirmed that, saying that their patrols after park hours have resulted in more people being caught on the swimming beach after 11 pm.

The July monthly report was approved on a motion by Kloeppel, seconded by Hutton.

Staff Member Presentation

Griggs introduced Gabe Huffington, supervisor of golf and sports turf, who has been with the department for 2 ½ years.

Huffington made a presentation to the Commission, describing his duties and those of his division. He and his staff are responsible for L.A. Nickell, Lake of the Woods and all of the athletic fields, with mowing, course setup, irrigation maintenance, bunker maintenance and pesticide application. Huffington described some of the new projects at the courses, such as building blue tees at Nickell, which has lengthened the course and made it more challenging. The crew also takes care of 65 athletic fields, which Huffington said amounts to "70 acres of grass and 10 acres of dirt." He said staff in particular works hard to prepare for and maintain fields over the weekends of the Show Me State Games. He hires young athletes as part-time staff when possible and also has employed youth in the CARE program. Staff stays busy over the winter as well with Clubhouse projects, maintenance and preparing for the following season.

Kloeppel asked about mowing?

Huffington said his crews do the fields and courses only. Natural resources staff takes care of parks.

Donaldson asked about the types of grass on the golf courses?

Huffington answered that the greens are bent, fairways are zoysia and roughs are fescue.

Pauls asked Huffington if his staff cares for the lakes on the courses?

Huffington said yes, that they add carp to control the algae and a safe herbicide. Aerators and fountains are used whenever possible, Huffington said, as the best way to control algae and minimize impact. He said they use as many organic products as possible.

Hood complimented Huffington, saying that he and his crews have done a great job over the summer with the heat and wet conditions. It's been a challenging season.

Budget Presentation

Hood presented the proposed FY2011 budget to the Parks and Recreation Commission for their review and comments. The new budget represents a 1.7% decrease from the current budget.

Hood explained the operating budgets of Parks and Recreation: general fund and recreation services fund. The bottom line of the general fund budget is a decrease of .1 percent

Devine asked if the department had any control over inter-governmental charges, as that was the biggest increase in the budget.

Hood answered no, that those charges represented support provided to Parks and Recreation by Human Resources, Information Technology, Finance, City Channel etc.

Hood then detailed the recreation services budget which is a 2.7% decrease.

Devine asked if staff anticipated an increase in subsidy to recreation when the economy turns around?

Hood said that he would guess that may not be the case.

Significant changes in the proposed budget are no new staffing while adding three neighborhood parks, transferal of funds within the department, deferred maintenance where possible, reducing sponsorships, reducing number of trees planted, and mowing frequency reduced. Staff showed an example of mowing changes at Stephens Lake Park and frequency that areas of the park are mowed.

In the recreation services fund, no fee increases are planned. Volunteers will be used as often as possible and the budget also reflects a decrease in materials and supplies. A pyramid approach will be continued in regard to recreation program pricing.

Hood summarized the budget as "hold the line" with no significant changes.

Blevins asked the Commission for comment.

Kloeppel said he saw nothing glaring and complimented staff on their hard work. **He made a motion, seconded by Davis, that the Commission recommend approval of the Parks and Recreation budget as presented. All in favor, motion passed.**

Park Sales Tax Update

Hood informed the Commission that the Council has approved the budget resolution placing the extension of the Park Sales Tax on the Nov 2 ballot. The Council expressed clear support for extending the tax, but debated how the funds should be allocated. They came to agreement on the amount to allocate for land acquisition in particular. Hood outlined each category and the amounts allocated.

The mayor will be appointing a campaign committee. Staff has compiled email addresses for potential contacts. Hood asked the Commission to pass along any personal contact they may have with community or service organizations.

Blevins asked Commissioners who attended the Aug 16 Council meeting for their feedback.

Kloeppel said the input he heard was favorable; he did not hear anything bad.

Davis echoed his comments, saying she was impressed by the support shown in the public hearing.

Kloeppel asked Hood if he knew of other tax issues on the ballot?

Hood answered that at this time, he did not of any.

Pauls asked for confirmation that the issue would be for 5 years?

Hood responded affirmatively, saying a 10-year extension was considered, but Council felt more comfortable asking the public for a five-year extension.

Land Preservation Criteria

As part of the Park Sales Tax initiative, Hood said the Council concluded they would like to adopt some criteria when considering and evaluating land for preservation. Several city staff members devised a scoring matrix as a starting point for discussion and review. The Commission has been asked for their input. Five areas were targeted for evaluation on a 100-point system: Area of Impact, Unique Features, Likelihood of Development, Potential Benefits, and Acquisition Potential. Donaldson questioned if this matrix would be used for Park Sales Tax projects only and Hood clarified that at this point, it would.

Hutton asked if having a system like this would restrict staff too much when it came to evaluating land?

Hood said no, the matrix was intended to provide guidelines only. Commissioners agreed that it should be stressed the matrix is a guideline only and perhaps should be reviewed annually to ensure it was still a workable document.

Pauls asked if it would be an advantage or disadvantage to have a point minimum above which a property must score to be considered for acquisition? Commissioners agreed that there should not be a minimum scoring requirement.

Devine commented he thought that potential benefits category should be at least equal in point value to the unique features category. Hutton agreed.

Kloeppel said he would like to see an increased point value for the acquisition potential category. Pauls and Blevins agreed.

Donaldson said she would like the unique features category to stay relatively strong because of different items of importance listed, including endangered species. She added that some of the components listed seemed subjective, such as scenic views. Commissioners agreed that instead of assigning a recommended amount of points to each individual component identified in the Unique Features category that the total points for the category should be a lump sum (for example 20 points). A property being evaluated would then receive the total points assigned to this category if it was determined that the site featured an appropriate representation of the various components listed for consideration under this category.

Hutton asked how the matrix would be applied and how many staff or city officials would be involved in the evaluation process? Hood responded that those details have not been established yet.

A motion was made by Kloeppel, seconded by Hutton, to recommend to Council the following changes to the land preservation criteria:

- **Decrease section B (Unique Features) to a maximum of 20 points and remove allowable points for the individual components identified in that particular section;**
- **Increase section E (Acquisition Potential) to 25 points by increasing the point value of “Willing seller below, at, or near appraised value” to 15 points; and**
- **Increase section C (Likelihood of Development) to 15 points by increasing the point value of “Likely to be developed within 5 yrs” to 10 points.**

All in favor, motion passed.

Council Items

Hood informed the Commission of these Council actions:

Trout program: Council has heard some interest in restoring this program at Cosmo-Bethel Park. It would be up to the Council for funding.

Maplewood Barn: two options for a new barn are being proposed and a public meeting is scheduled for input.

Donaldson asked about the difference in cost between the two options?

Hood said it would not be significant. If the park sales tax is approved and the building moves forward, the project will likely be referred to the Commission at some point for comment.

Hominy Creek Trail: public hearing set on Phase I of the project.

Capital Projects

Griggs shared these updates:

MKT Bridges 12 and 13: are now operational.

American Legion Park: ballfield renovation is continuing.

Stephens Lake Park: final details of amphitheater construction underway with railing, performance sound walls and sound stage railing.

Douglass Park: walkways to spraygrounds have been installed.

Lange School: track has been completed.

Lange Park: playground has been installed and grading for trail construction completed.

Smiley Park: bioswale and rain garden are being constructed.

Philips Lake Park: restroom has been placed.

Recreation Services Update

Coffman shared these updates:

4th of July Fire in the Sky: event went well and plans have started for 2011.

Punt, Pass and Kick: annual youth event held in Cosmo Park on Aug 14.

Go Skateboarding Day: weather postponed the event from its original June date to Aug 14.

Summer Dance Camp: held at the ARC in early August.

Blue Thunder Track: The athletes recently competed at national championship with five top-10 finishes.

Moonlight Hoops: Eleven youth teams participated this summer.

Mizzou swim at the ARC: football team recently had gathering at the ARC to swim.

Upcoming events: Teen Garage Band Bash on Aug 20, OAK Summer Dance on Aug 20, Pooch Plunge on Sept 7, U.S. Cellular Movies in the Park on Sept 10, Family Fun Fest on Sept 15, and 33rd Annual Heritage Festival on Sept 18-19.

Commission Comments

Pauls asked about the NRPA Conference in Minneapolis?

Hood answered that he did not know if there would be funds in the travel budget. That will be determined.

Staff Comments

Hood said that staff would present the findings from the citizen survey at the September meeting.

Public Comments

None.

Meeting adjourned at 9:30 pm.